

Bare Plurals in Spanish are Interpreted as Properties McNally, Louise

Abstract: In this paper, I argue that bare plural noun phrases in Spanish unambiguously denote properties of individuals. I begin by using evidence from their incompatibility with kind-level predicates to show that Spanish bare plurals do not denote kinds. I then point to crucial ways in which their interaction with quantifiers is unlike that of other indefinite NPs (specifically, they have obligatory narrowest scope and cannot contribute the main restriction on a quantifier), and I conclude that bare plurals must therefore have a different semantics from other indefinites. I present a formal semantic analysis which allows for any verbal predicate in Spanish to combine with a propertytype noun phrase, showing how this analysis can also account for certain facts involving discourse anaphora to bare plurals. Finally, I discuss the advantages of the proposed analysis over those which try to maintain a uniform semantics for bare plurals and indefinites and indicate some of the general implications of the proposal.

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